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FROM US Naval Attache Helsinki	SOURCE Personal Observation	EVALUATION A-1
SUBJECT FINLAND-USSR; Actions of Soviet Military Attache	REQUEST NO.	

FINLAND-USSR: Actions of Soviet Military Attaché

BRIEF (FOR REPORTS OF MORE THAN ONE PAGE, ENTER CAREFUL SUMMARY)

Foreign Attachés accredited in Helsinki attended a luncheon given by the Commanding General, Finnish Defense Forces, at the conclusion of Finnish Military Winter Games. The new Soviet Military Attaché, Major General Vinogradov, was assigned a place of honor higher than rated by established protocol, and delivered a friendship speech, also uncalled for, which was received with tongue-in-cheek by the Finnish general officers, occurring on the 15th anniversary of the Winter War armistice and surrender of Karelia to the USSR.

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Ref: (a) AIIUSA Helsinki Report 7-55 of 15 Jan 1955

1. CHANGE IN PRECEDENCE ACCORDED SOVIET ATTACHE. During the period 10-13 March, 1955, the Finnish Defense Forces held their annual winter games at Hameenlinna. On Sunday, 13 March, General Heiskanen, Commanding General of Defense Forces, gave a luncheon attended by all high ranking officers of the Defense Forces, and foreign attaches. The senior attache, Lieutenant Colonel Wennberg, Sweden, did not attend due to illness; Colonel Cochran, U. S. Military Attache, therefore acted as Senior attache in accordance with the rules promulgated by the Finnish Foreign Section and reported in reference (a). By their regulations, seniority of attaches is determined entirely by date of presenting credentials, without regard to rank. Colonel Cochran occupied the seat on General Heiskanen's right, as honor guest. Wing Commander Deytrikh, British Air Attache should, in accordance with the rules of precedence, have been seated on General Heiskanen's left, but was in fact seated at a lower table. Major General Vinogradov, new Soviet Military

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INFORMATION REPORT

OPNAV FORM 8820-2(C) (6-58)

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FROM

US Naval Attache Helsinki

REPORT NO.

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Attache, was seated on General Heiskanen's left. A query by one of the U. S. attaches to the Head of the Foreign Section after the luncheon as to whether the rules of precedence had been changed elicited the reply that they definitely had, by someone higher than the Foreign Section chief, but that the regulations would remain on the books without change.

2. ADDRESS BY SOVIET MILITARY ATTACHE. General Heiskanen delivered a welcoming speech to the assembly in Finnish, English and Russian. Colonel Cochran, as the senior attache delivered a return speech on behalf of all attaches accredited in Helsinki, speaking in English and Finnish. A few moments later, General Vinogradov jumped to his feet apparent, unexpectedly as far as the Finns were concerned, and delivered a speech in Russian, translated to Finnish only by one of his Finnish-English speaking assistants. It is considered quite likely that Vinogradov may have stated to General Heiskanen just before rising that he wished to say a few words. His speech consisted of some typical phrases stressing the great friendship the Russians feel for the Finns, the Russians admiration for Finnish skiers, and his hope for undying friendship between the two countries, etc. His speech was unusual in four ways: first, by long standing protocol only the senior attache speaks; second, March 13th was the 15th anniversary of the Winter War Armistice and the surrender of Karelia to the USSR, which placed the Finns in a completely unreceptive mood; third, General Vinogradov ended with the usual toast, and since this speech was rendered between courses of the luncheon, he had the only glass which he had been clutching for some time; all Finns were thus able to raise empty glasses to the toast, with varied and suitable glances to each other. Fourth, the General's speech followed the recent sound trouncing of Soviet teams in international ski competitions by the Finns, giving the Finns adequate grounds for comment.

INFORMATION REPORT

G-2 FORM 3020-2(G) (6-58)

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Prepared for Commanding Officer's Comment:

The change in protocol, while not unexpected, emphasized the continued pressure placed on Finland by the Russians. The Finns can at least take some pleasure, however, in the fact that the Soviet military attaché's speech produced entirely the opposite effect to the one he intended. It will certainly endeear him to the Finnish army.

JAMES F. BURT
Commander, USN.